

a small pool of ten to twelve sq. ft. area beneath the shade of great trees in the otherwise dry bed of Kapuria River, some four miles from Sasan Rest House. As far as I am aware this species has not been recorded earlier from the Gir.

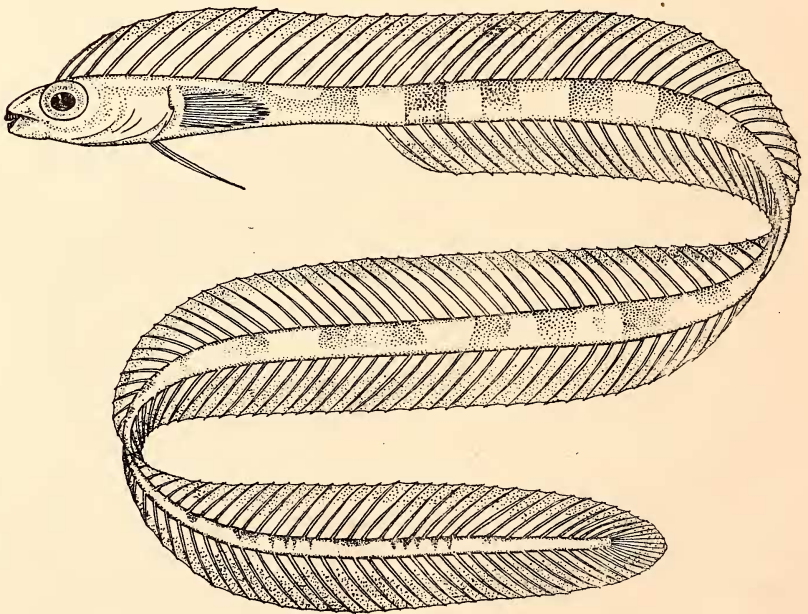
3, KAMAR VILLA,
OPP. MAHENDRA GHAT,
MORVI (SAURASHTRA),
July 21, 1966.

LALSINH M. RAOL

7. ON A RARE BLENNID FISH *XIPHASIA SETIFER*
SWAINSON FROM THE MADRAS COAST

(With two text-figures)

In September 1965 the junior author made extensive collections of fish from the Madras coast and also visited the fish markets in Madras to examine the fish catches brought to them. At Royapuram market on 11 September he procured an eel-like fish which appeared very curious and interesting. On his return to Calcutta the fish was



TEXT-FIG. 1. Lateral view of *Xiphasia setifer* Swainson.

identified in the laboratories of the Zoological Survey of India as *Xiphasia setifer* Swainson.

Swainson (1839) named the fish from the illustration of it given by Russell in his DESCRIPTION AND FIGURES OF TWO HUNDRED FISHES COLLECTED AT VIZAGAPATAM ON THE COAST OF COROMANDEL (1803). Jerdon (1851) in his account of the fish observed: 'I one day procured two specimens of this curious species of *Gymnotus*, which Swainson has named from Russell's figure, which however is very defective. Its tail ends in a long filament, and the dorsal and anal fins are much higher than is there represented.' Day (1878) based his description mainly on Russell's figure but his illustration, which shows the presence of a long caudal filament, was taken from a drawing in Sir W. Elliot's collection (Day 1878, p. 337). The species was not represented in the Zoological Survey of India collections.

In the circumstances related it was considered worthwhile to give a detailed description illustrated with drawings made from the present specimen, which measures 288.0 mm. in length:

***Xiphasia setifer* Swainson**

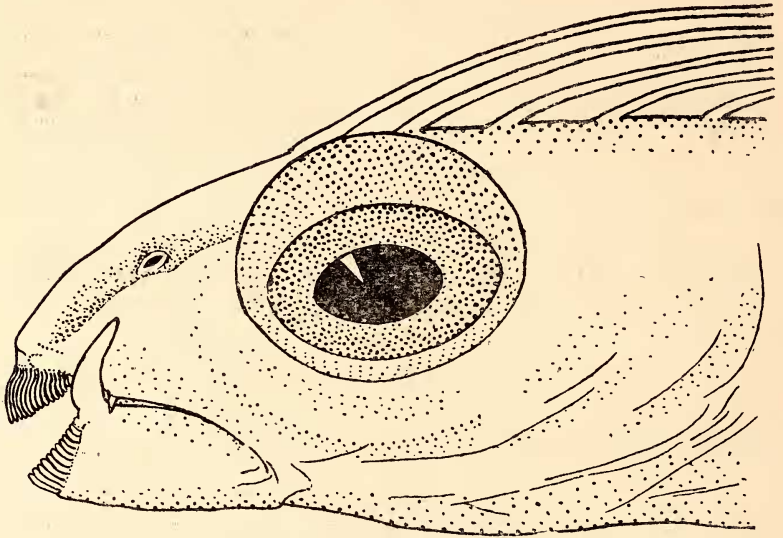
D. 121 A. 107 P. 13 V. 3 C. 9

Body exceedingly elongate; depth 36.0 in total length, head 13.1; eye 3.14 in head length, equal to snout. Interorbital space flat slightly more than half diameter of eye. Mouth terminal, slightly oblique, cleft reaching up to anterior border of eye. Upper and lower jaws with a row of rather long, feeble, incisiform teeth and posterior canines. Canines on lower jaw sharply pointed, curved inward and fitting into a groove-like structure on palate. Canines on upper jaw smaller. Gill openings small vertical slits about size of eye, situated at base of pectorals. Dorsal commences above front margin of eye, anterior rays as long as head without snout. Anal commences below 17th dorsal ray, distance between its origin and tip of snout 5.8 in total length. Both fins broadly united to caudal. Pectoral rounded, equal to posterior part of head. Ventrals with the middle rays produced slightly longer than pectorals. Lateral line indistinct. Colour yellowish-grey with about 26 distinct brown crossbands on body. Dorsal and anal fins black, pectorals and ventrals yellowish-grey.

Distribution. Tropical Indo-Pacific extending from East Africa to Japan and Australia through India and Indo-Australian Archipelago.

Remarks. There is no elongated caudal filament in the present

specimen though Jerdon (1851) noticed caudal filaments in his two specimens from Madras. Smith (1953) mentions the presence of



TEXT-FIG. 2. Lateral view of head of *X. setifer* showing the teeth and origin of the dorsal fin above anterior margin of eye x 6.

caudal filaments in the African specimens, whereas the specimens from the Indo-Australian Archipelago (De Beaufort & Chapman 1951) do not have any. The presence or absence of caudal filaments may be a secondary sexual character and unless a larger number of adult specimens are examined nothing definite about it can be concluded. The black markings on the dorsal fin seen in the case of specimens from the Indo-Australian Archipelago (De Beaufort & Chapman 1951) are absent in our specimen.

According to Day (1878) the fish grows to about 14 feet. Ordinarily it is not known to grow more than 2 feet in length though Smith (1953) in his account of the fish observes: '... pearl divers of the tropical Pacific describe an eel-like creature several yards long much like this species. This they fear greatly, as it is said to attack with great ferocity, and once the great fangs are buried in a man he cannot escape and drowns.'

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8. TWO NEW SPECIES OF TRICHIURID FISH FROM WALT AIR¹

(With a plate)

So far, four species of Trichiurids have been recorded from Indian waters: *Eupleurogrammus intermedius* (Gray), *E. muticus* (Gray), *Trichiurus lepturus* Linnaeus, and *Lepturacanthus savala* (Cuvier) (Day 1876; De Beaufort & Chapman 1951; Prabhu 1955; James 1959). Tucker (1956) has given the synonymy of these four species. In the course of studies on the biology and biometry of the Trichiurids of Waltair Coast, two new species have been observed, one under the genus *Trichiurus* and the other under the genus *Lepturacanthus*.

Trichiurus russelli sp. nov.

Holotype. A fish, 419 mm. total length, from Waltair, Andhra Pradesh. Holotype deposited in museum of Department of Zoology, Andhra University, Waltair.

Description. Based on 30 specimens 257-465 mm. total length. D. III, 126-131; A. i+I, 100-104; P. I, 10; V. 0; Vert. 146-149.

Body proportions variable; depth 12.92-15.29; head length 7.14-8.20; post-anal length 1.48-1.55; length from snout to origin of dorsal 10.69-12.51 in total length; snout length 2.87-3.17 in head length; diameter of eye 1.55-1.81 in snout length; length of pectoral 1.60-1.96 in depth. Dorsal and pectoral fins not pigmented. Origin of anal below 33-36 dorsal rays. Caniniform teeth in both the jaws barbed. Silvery in colour.

¹ Communicated by Dr. T. S. Satyanarayana Rao.